

Mission:

We, the gamemakers of *The End*, believe that the stigma and anxiety associated with death can create feelings of helplessness and powerlessness. We believe, too, that there are few opportunities to consider our eventual end until we must face it imminently. As such, we desire to create a context for this understanding and have worked to create an experience that allows audiences space for such reflection.

The End is a contemplative game that imagines how we live differently when we are consciously aware we will die. Using a blend of performance and alternate reality game (ARG), *The End* is an opportunity to engage in small daily examinations of our fears about mortality, to become brave in the face of them, and by thinking about what is wanted out of life, to fully make the most of the time we have left.

We offer *The End* from a spirit of generosity, craft and care. We have also aimed for a sense of play: leaving enough randomness, variation, and surprise to keep those who participate engaged and challenged. We expect some moments of *The End* will be hard. We hope it is equally rewarding, and at times even fun. Above all, we aim to inspire agency and offer a structured container for audience members to bear witness to their own individual experience.

The End is a system, one that is only operational when actively engaged.

The End is a solo journey, though not one made in isolation.

The End won't judge or attempt to explain the inexplicable, but instead reflects back the discoveries you have made.

Perhaps the bottom line is that we want you to find yourself at the center of your own existence and experiences. We attend to you (in order to remind you) that it is *your* life that you are watching. Ultimately, we imagine *The End* will be what you make it, that the meaning of *The End* will be up to you.

Mechanics:

You arrive home to find a package in your mailbox: inside is a unique deck and an invitation to a celebration a month away. You look at the cards – beautiful, perhaps a little cryptic, filled with exciting symbols and some simple words. As you examine the invite you see that beyond the date and time of the imminent gathering, it also offers you a few simple rules for how to start the experience of *The End*. It asks if you are ready to enter an imaginary world, a story in which you will imagine that you have just under a month left to live.

The End is an interactive game about mortality that is played as you live your life. As a player you will use this set of 52 cards as a key to unlock this unusual four-week choose-your-own-adventure experience. Each day *The End* asks you to devote a little time to understand mortality in a different way. Every card contains a different invitation to a creative act or thoughtful reflection and each 28-day game sequence will be unique to which cards you decide to play. Using the rules offered as a structure to work with (or against), you will craft your journey with the support of a personal *The End* guide, who can offer you advice about how to navigate the game.

The End is inspired by site-specific theater – a form that takes performance out into “real world” spaces – as well as alternate reality games in which players’ actions and storytelling are central plot of the narrative. When you take part in the experience *The End* will ask you to imagine your life as a drama that is unfolding and to think of yourself as the central character in that story. We are asking you to play a role, but the character you portray is *you*. And so, rather than putting on a costume and pretending to be someone else, we ask you to see what happens if you imagine your life in the context of a new circumstance and what you learn if you walk through daily experiences with a new lens on your life. We invite you to imagine how your *actual* life might be different if you knew that our fictional premise were true.

The End seeks to interact with you in all the ways you live – through text message, email and social media posting, phone and in-person experience – and the “playing” of the game can be tailored to suit the mode of communication that best suits you. Each day you will choose a card that offers a different task – a solo meditation at home, a short letter written on a lunch break and mailed off to a friend, a text conversation about regret, a ten minute walk through a cemetery guided by a person on the phone, maybe even a conversation with a stranger in a local café about your unrealized dreams – all aimed at examining your values, choices, and wishes for life. We offer you the ability to play at your own pace and in your own style. While a daily investment in gameplay is suggested, you have ultimate control of the timing and level of emotional intensity.